

Appl. No. 09/376,017
Amdt. dated January 21, 2005
Reply to Office action of October 21, 2004

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10, 12-18 and 20-34 were pending. Claims 1-10, 12-18, 20-22, 26-27 and 32-33 were rejected.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the examiner's indication that claims 23-25, 28, 29-31 and 34 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 12 and 15-16 have been rewritten to include the features of claim 23, which was found to contain allowable subject matter, and is now canceled without prejudice. Therefore claims 1, 12 and 15-16 should now be allowable. Claims 2-10, 21-22 and 24-27 are dependent on claim 1, and Claims 17-18 and 29-33 are dependent on claim 16. Therefore claims 2-10, 17-18, 21-22, 24-27 and 29-33 should also be allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 20 has been amended to include the features of claim 34, and should now be allowable.

Claim 28 has been rewritten in independent form, including the features of claim 1 and claim 6.

Claim 34 has been rewritten in independent form.

The foregoing amendments do not introduce any new matter or new issue of patentability. Therefore, entry of the amendments under 37 CFR § 1.116 is proper.

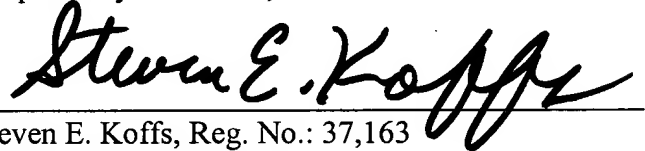
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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all the objections in the official action have been overcome, and this application is in condition for allowance. Early notification to that effect is respectfully requested.

The Assistant Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any excess payment that may be associated with this communication to deposit account **04-1679**.

Dated: 1-21-05

Respectfully submitted,



Steven E. Koffs, Reg. No.: 37,163
Attorney For Applicants

DUANE MORRIS LLP
One Liberty Place
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-7396
(215) 979-1250 (Telephone)
(215) 979-1020 (Fax)